if the train was on time. Eugene and I took our pistols out of our pockets and held them in sight. The man who had questioned us turned to the crowd. "Christians! These fiends are enemies of our holy Church and the Tsar. They stopped the railroad and burned down the church. They want to restore serfdom. Death to them!"

The crowd moved nearer. I raised the revolver and was ready to fire when I realized I was alone at the door of the telegraph room. Eugene had noticed that the door to the platform on the far side of the waiting room was open and dashed toward it, certain that we would follow him. He had almost reached the door when the watchman struck him on the head with a piece of firewood, and at the same moment Zaloga and Alexander threw themselves under the bench. If I fired now I would leave all three comrades in the hands of the mob. So I shifted the guard on my Browning, dropped it into my pocket, and stepped further back into the corner. The man who had questioned us shouted, "Christians! This is the main fiend. Get him!"

Unseen hands pulled me out of the corner. Blows fell on my head. I realized I had lost my glasses and felt blood in my mouth, but I sensed no pain, fear, or anger. Then I blacked out.

When I came to my senses, everything seemed dark about me. I wiped the blood from my eyes and saw some felt boots in front of me in puddles of melted snow. Eugene was lying a few feet from me. Without glasses, I could not see his face clearly, but I did see that he wore only a shirt and underwear, his blond hair was a clot of blood, and there was blood on the floor around his head. With some effort I got up and took a step in his direction, but two men grabbed me. Rough hands tore at my clothing and boots.

Then I heard the train arriving. The crowd waited in silence, but no one entered the room from the platform. The train left. The room again was filled with the roar of the mob. Another blow on my head laid me on the floor again, and I could not get up.

The empty space in front of Eugene and me suddenly widened. A man in a long black coat stood between us and the peasants. I heard him saying, "What are you doing, brothers? Have you forgotten that murder is the greatest, unforgivable sin?"

An angry voice interrupted him. "Mind your own business, Father! Your place is in the church, not here!"

"My place is where I can prevent a sin," the priest pleaded.

"There is no sin in killing these fiends!" replied the angry voice.

But the priest stood between us and the mob, and the muzhiks did not dare push him away. Suddenly somebody shouted, "Brothers! The cause of all evil, the Chorino teacher, is not here."

Through the roar of the mob I could hear the faltering voice: